

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-16 (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A tread has having an equatorial centerplane CP and a plurality of tread elements, the tread elements being oriented into a first shoulder row, a second shoulder row and a central row, the tread characterized in that:

the central row comprises circumferentially repeating arrays of tread elements wherein each array has a plurality of tread elements distinct in size, shape or orientation relative to adjacent tread elements;

each array including opposite elongate sides that extend at an angled incline from a lower first array end adjacent the first shoulder row, an array midsection crossing the equatorial centerplane CP to an upper second end adjacent the opposite shoulder row, and each array widening continuously from the first and second array ends to the array midsection;

adjacent arrays in a circumferential direction having an overlapping mutual orientation wherein the upper and lower ends of each array are located circumferentially opposite a midsection of the elongate sides of upper and lower adjacent arrays, respectively.

18. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein each array is spaced from an adjacent array by a first boundary groove and a second boundary groove extending from the first shoulder row of tread elements and the second row of tread elements respectively, the first boundary groove and second boundary groove converging at an acute angle and intersecting at the first and second ends of the array.

19. (previously presented) The tread of claim 18, wherein the first and second ends of each array are comprised of tread elements relatively smaller than tread elements located toward said midsection.

20. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17, wherein a non-linear boundary groove separates each array from the first and second shoulder rows.

21. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17, wherein each array has at

least 10 tread elements forming a repeating pattern.

22. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein each array has fifteen or more tread elements forming the repeating pattern.

23. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein each array is spaced from an adjacent array by a first continuous and curvilinear boundary groove and a second continuous and curvilinear boundary groove extending from the first shoulder row of tread elements and the second row of tread elements respectively, the first boundary groove and second boundary groove intersecting at the first and second ends of the array.

24. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein the tread is pitched including three or more distinct pitch lengths arranged in a noise reducing sequence and each array extends circumferentially across at least one or more pitches.

25. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein each array forms a large distinctive repeating mosaic shape formed by at least five smaller tread elements of different sizes, shapes or orientation.

26. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein the centerline L of each array is inclined circumferentially less than 30° relative to the equatorial centerplane CP.

27. (previously presented) The tread of claim 17 wherein the tread pattern is nondirectional and symmetrical circumferentially adjacent the central arrays.

28. (previously presented) The tread of Claim 17 wherein the tread pattern is asymmetric.

29. (currently amended) A tread ~~has~~ having an equatorial centerplane CP and a plurality of tread elements, the tread elements being oriented into a first shoulder row, a second shoulder row and a central row, the tread characterized in that:

the central row comprises circumferentially repeating arrays of tread elements wherein each array has a plurality of tread elements distinct in size, shape or orientation relative to

adjacent tread elements;

each array including opposite elongate sides that extend at an angled incline from a lower first array end adjacent the first shoulder row, an array midsection crossing the equatorial centerplane CP to an upper second end adjacent the opposite shoulder row, and each array widening continuously from the first and second array ends to the relatively wider array midsection; and

the tread center row being separated from the first and second shoulder rows by shoulder grooves, the shoulder grooves following an angled and inclined segment of the opposite sides of each array.

30. (previously presented) The tread of claim 29 wherein adjacent arrays in a circumferential direction have an overlapping mutual orientation wherein the upper and lower ends of each array are located circumferentially opposite a midsection of the elongate sides of upper and lower adjacent arrays, respectively.

31. (previously presented) The tread of claim 29 wherein each array is spaced from an adjacent array by a first boundary groove and a second boundary groove extending from the first shoulder row of tread elements and the second row of tread elements respectively, the first boundary groove and second boundary groove converging at an acute angle and intersecting at the first and second ends of the array.

32. (previously presented) The tread of claim 29, wherein the first and second ends of each array are comprised of tread elements relatively smaller than tread elements located toward said midsection.

The above amendments are supported by the original specification